

ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT

for

FISCAL YEAR 2011: JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011

I. SUMMARY

The Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC) had another active year pursuing its three-fold mission of preservation, education, and advocacy for Alexandria's archaeological and historical resources as they arose regarding issues involving City of Alexandria Strategic Plan (see section III of this report). In particular, the AAC focused on Waterfront Plan issues, the Torpedo Factory Study and its implications for the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, and crafting a new strategic plan for the AAC.

During Fiscal Year 2011, the AAC:

- Waterfront Plan:
 - Drafted the Waterfront History Plan, which became Appendix 6 of the proposed Waterfront Small Area Plan.
 - Sent a letter to the Planning Commission supporting the general concept of the Waterfront Arts Plan, which is Appendix 5 of the proposed Waterfront Small Area Plan.
 - Sent recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council regarding the AAC's views on the proposed Waterfront Small Area Plan.
- Fort Ward History & Archaeology:
 - Spoke at a City Council Work Session, spoke at a public hearing, and sent letters to City Council asking that \$75,000 for continued archaeological work at Fort Ward be appropriated in the FY2012 budget.
 - Spoke at a City Council Work Session, spoke at a public hearing, and sent letter to City Council in support of the recommendations set forth in the final report of the Fort Ward Park and Museum Stakeholders Advisory Group.

- Torpedo Factory Art Center/Alexandria Archaeology Museum:
 - Sent a letter to City Council advocating for restoration of funding for a part-time position to staff the Archaeology Museum on Sundays.
 - Spoke at a public hearing and sent letters to City Council recommending an AAC representative, with voting rights, on the Torpedo Factory Art Center Board.
 - Recommended the appointment of Mary Jane Nugent as the AAC non-voting representative on the Torpedo Factory Art Center Board.
- Awards:
 - Presented the Ben Brenman Archaeology Awards to recipients Judy McConville, Wesley Pippenger, and (posthumously) Ellen Pickering.
- AAC Planning:
 - Adopted new AAC Strategic Plan

II. GOALS FOR FY2011

The Archaeological Commission set as its goals for July 2010 – June 2011:

- Working with other City organizations or civic groups which are interested in historic preservation and the waterfront for greater co-ordination on issues concerning the waterfront, including planning for Civil War Sesquicentennial;
- Incorporating archaeological and historic resources into discussions and planning involving tourism and economic development;
- Improving archaeological staffing levels while better utilizing dynamic volunteer group and promoting cooperative efforts with the larger history community;
- Enhancing the presence of archaeology and history on the waterfront to increase resident and visitor awareness and improve visitor experience by improving the Archaeology Museum, office and storage space; and
- Improving funding for the Alexandria Archaeology program.

III. AAC Activities Conducted in FY2011

The Archaeological Commission pursued a variety of activities during FY2011. These activities are set forth below and are organized within headings taken from the City's Strategic Plan in order to facilitate an understanding of how the Commission's activities relate to the vision, goals,

and objectives of the City. The AAC met 12 times during the fiscal year and its Waterfront Plan subcommittee met eight times in a two month period this fiscal year.

QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

Waterfront Planning: The AAC established a Waterfront History sub-committee, at the behest of the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission, to draft a Waterfront History Plan. Archaeological Commission members, working with City staff and members of the public, created the Waterfront History Plan to provide substance and historical content for the City's 2010 draft Waterfront Concept Plan. The History Plan provided a series of historical narratives, recommendations for preserving, interpreting, and promoting historical sites, events, and eras along the Waterfront and was organized around the City's draft Planning Outline for ease of use and to assist in future planning. The Planning and Zoning (P&Z) staff included the AAC's Waterfront History Plan as Appendix 6 of the draft Waterfront Small Area Plan. Sub-committee Chair James McCall presented the Waterfront History Plan to P&Z, the Waterfront Committee, the Planning Commission, the Commission for the Arts and other City and civic groups and organizations. The Commission also wrote letters to the Planning Commission and City Council regarding the draft Waterfront Small Area Plan in which several recommendations to enhance historic character were made.

The AAC continued to engage in an ongoing collaborative approach to integrating arts and history themes in public art along the Waterfront. The Commission wrote a letter to the Planning Commission supporting the general concept of the Waterfront Arts Plan (Appendix 5 of the draft Waterfront Small Area Plan) and recommending that a committee of art and history representatives be formed to participate in designing and implementing a master arts and history plan.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH OF CITIZENS

Fort Ward: Commission member Tom Fulton continued to serve as a representative and chair on the Fort Ward Park and Museum Stakeholder's Advisory Group, which produced its final report in January 2011. Mr. Fulton served as the Advisory Group's speaker, regarding the final report and recommendations, at a City Council Work Session on Fort Ward. AAC Chair, Kathleen Pepper spoke at the Work Session in support of the Advisory Group's recommendations and for additional funding for archaeology at Fort Ward. The AAC also sent a letter of support advocating adoption of the recommendations in the final report. The AAC also sent City Council letters requesting additional funding be allocated in the FY2012 budget for continued archaeological work at Fort Ward. City Council accepted the AAC's recommendations and voted for the FY2012 budget to include \$75,000 for a Stage II Archaeology and History Report and \$75,000 for archaeology associated with storm water drainage planning to insure graves and cultural resources are protected.

FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE, EFFICIENT, AND COMMUNITY ORIENTED GOVERNMENT

Torpedo Factory Art Center and Archaeology Museum: The Commission wrote a letter to City Council, and Chair, Kathleen Pepper, spoke at a public hearing on the proposed Torpedo Factory Art Center (TFAC) Board and urged City Council to include a representative of the AAC as a voting member of that proposed Board so long as there is an Archaeology staff and/or Museum in the Torpedo Factory. The Commission endorsed member Mary Jane Nugent to represent the AAC as a non-voting “invited participant” on the TFAC Board.

Alexandria Budget for FY2012: The members discussed budget issues for FY2012, including the result of the FY2011 Sunday staffing reduction on operation of the Archaeology Museum on Sundays. That staffing reduction resulted in the loss of a paid position to work the Sunday hours of 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Throughout FY2011, volunteers have worked Sundays to keep the Museum open, but a staff person had to be present on-site for security purposes. Members noted the increasing difficulty in getting volunteers to work consistently in the Museum on Sundays, a day which accounts for one-fourth of the annual Museum visitation. Members approved sending a letter to City Council recommending that funding be added to the budget so that the Museum would not close on Sundays.

Friends of Alexandria Archaeology: The AAC held its annual joint meeting with the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA) in April to discuss support for the Waterfront History Plan.

Alexandria Archaeological Commission Strategic Plan and Goals: Led by Vice-Chair Vincent LaPointe, the Commission continued to refine its Strategic Plan in light of City Council’s adoption of a new City Strategic Plan in 2010. The members approved four goals involving (1) People – Alexandria Archaeology staffing, volunteers, and the history community; (2) Archaeology Museum/ Lab/ Education Center/ Storage; (3) Resource Management – funding; and (4) Archaeology, History, and Preservation. A variety of objectives within each goal were also approved.

Alexandria Archaeological Commission Off-Site Meetings: The AAC continued its tradition of learning about different historic places and issues this year. The Commission members met at several sites throughout the City, including the Office of Historic Alexandria Shop on the Waterfront, the Athenaeum which was also the joint meeting with FOAA, and the Lloyd House at the lower campus of St. Stephen’s and St. Agnes School. Members also had its annual walk-about meeting in June 2011, focused on Civil War sites in Old Town Alexandria, led by Susan Cumbe, Director of Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site.

DIVERSE COMMUNITY, HISTORY AND CULTURE, AFFORDABILITY

Freedmen’s Cemetery: The AAC continued to keep abreast of the issues regarding the Contrabands and Freedmen’s Cemetery and Memorial Park. AAC Chair Kathleen Pepper represents the AAC on the Contrabands and Freedmen’s Cemetery and Memorial Park Design

Steering Committee and AAC member Lillie Finklea represents the Friends of Freedmen's Cemetery on that committee. Both are also members of the sculpture committee.

Morrison House Talks: The AAC continued to support the series of history and arts talks presented at the Morrison House on the first Tuesday of each month. The series is sponsored jointly with the Torpedo Factory Artists' Association and the Morrison House Hotel.

IV. GOALS FOR FY2012

The Archaeological Commission set as its goals for July 2011 – June 2012:

- Working with other City organizations or groups which are interested in historic preservation and the waterfront for greater co-ordination on issues concerning the waterfront, including planning for the Civil War Sesquicentennial, and Fort Ward Park;
- Continued active involvement in the Contrabands and Freedmen's Cemetery and Memorial Park;
- Incorporating archaeological and historic resources into discussions and planning involving tourism and economic development; and
- Improving archaeological staffing levels while better utilizing the dynamic volunteer group and promoting cooperative efforts with the larger history community;
- Enhancing the presence of archaeology and history on the waterfront to increase resident and visitor awareness and improve visitor experience by improving the Archaeology Museum, office and storage space; and
- Improving funding for the Alexandria Archaeology program.

V. RECRUITMENT, LEADERSHIP SELECTION, AND SUCCESSION

The Archaeological Commission recruits members by referral and the recommendation of sitting members, by advertisement on the City's website, and/or by other City organizations they will represent. In addition, the Archaeological Commission seeks an active presence throughout the City, holding its scheduled meetings at widespread locations to allow the public to learn more of its activities and opportunities. Both Commissioners and staff attend historically-related events, presentations, tours, etc., at which they may promote AAC and also service on the Commission. Nominees are encouraged to attend Commission meetings prior to formal application to City Council to help inform them of current issues, and the activities and makeup of the Commission. The AAC's brochure is distributed and appears on the OHA/Alexandria Archaeology website.

The Archaeological Commission chooses its officers by simple majority vote from among nominees proposed at the October AAC meeting: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. A slate of officers is presented for this vote by the Slate Committee in September. Any additional names may be included from the members before the October vote. Individual members may not nominate themselves. Terms are not staggered. The leadership serves a one-year term, and an unexpected vacancy is filled for the remainder of the term. Leaders may serve again at the discretion of the Commission, but must be re-nominated in competition with other nominees and chosen again by simple majority.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair acts in its stead, both at AAC meetings and representing AAC at HARC and other meetings. The Vice-Chair has also headed strategic planning for the Commission, ensuring continuity and depth of understanding of goals and activities. Individual Commissioners also act in a leadership capacity, heading subcommittees or representing AAC at Council, or at the meetings of other City commissions and organizations. Service on these committees helps prepare Commissioners as future officers of the AAC.

VI. STRUCTURE OF THE ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION

The Alexandria Archaeological Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council on matters relating to the City's archaeological resources and related issues within the City. Included among the AAC's responsibilities are the establishment of goals and priorities which contribute to the history and heritage of colonial, federal and historic Alexandria; propose local ordinances and state statutes to the City Council and the City Manager which promote the goals and aims embodied in Ordinance No. 3733; plan, develop and recommend short-, mid-, and long-term archaeological plans and programs for the City; encourage the integration of archaeological and historical information and site preservation into master plans and development efforts; study and make recommendations to City Council with respect to additional activities involving the City's archaeological program and artifacts; promote the use of the highest professional standards by Alexandria Archaeology staff; and enhance the visibility of the City of Alexandria as a leader in archaeology throughout Virginia, the United States, and the world.

AAC meetings are held at least 10 times per year, on the third Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum and, several times a year, at other sites of interest to the Commission. The fourteen (14) members of AAC include five (5) members at large, three (3) citizen members representing each of the City's three planning districts, and six (6) members representing various City organizations.

Elections are held in October of each year. The Commission officers consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Due to changes in membership and elections, person serving on the Commission may be listed in more than one representative or leadership capacity.

The following people served on the Commission during Fiscal Year 2011:

MEMBERS AT LARGE:

Ann Davin
Lillie Finklea
James McCall
Peter Petersen
Edward (Ted) Pulliam

PLANNING DISTRICT MEMBERS:

Planning District I: Vincent C. LaPointe, Vice-Chair
Planning District II: Donald Kent, Jr.
Planning District III: Janice Magnuson, Secretary

ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES:

Alexandria Association: Tom Fulton
Alexandria Historical Society: Georgia (Katy) Cannady
Alexandria Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage: S. Kathleen Pepper, Chair
Chamber of Commerce: Ellen Hamilton
Friends of Alexandria Archaeology: Mary Jane Nugent
Historic Alexandria Foundation: Seth Tinkam